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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the Third Committee (A/50/635/Add.2)]

50/187. Strengthening of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/135 of 15 December 1989, 45/180 of 21 December 1990, 46/111 and 46/118 of 17 December 1991, 47/127 of 18 December 1992, 48/129 and 48/141 of 20 December 1993 and 49/195 of 23 December 1994, and bearing in mind all relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights,

Considering that the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms is one of the basic purposes of the United Nations enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and a priority activity of the Organization,

Taking into account the fact that in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, concerned by the growing disparity between the activities of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat and the human, financial and other resources available to carry them out, and bearing in mind the resources needed for other important United Nations programmes, requested the Secretary-General and the General Assembly to take immediate steps to increase substantially the resources for the human rights programme, from within the existing and future regular budgets of the United Nations, and to take urgent steps to seek increased extrabudgetary resources, 1/

1/ See A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III, sect. II, para. 9.

Noting that in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights stressed the importance of strengthening the Centre, 2/

Taking into account the establishment of the post of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as the mandate for the post, including its coordinating role and its overall supervision of the Centre, as well as the request by the General Assembly in resolution 48/141 for appropriate staff and resources to enable the High Commissioner to fulfil his mandate,

Noting with concern that the response to these requests has not been commensurate with the needs, resulting in a serious imbalance between the mandates assigned to the High Commissioner and the Centre by the competent bodies of the United Nations system in the field of human rights and the resources available to fulfil all of these mandates,

Taking into account the fact that, in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the World Conference on Human Rights urged all United Nations organs, bodies and the specialized agencies whose activities deal with human rights to cooperate in order to strengthen, rationalize and streamline their activities, taking into account the need to avoid unnecessary duplication, 3/

Noting that the High Commissioner and the Centre are a unity whereby the High Commissioner, in accordance with resolution 48/141, sets the policy directions and the priority of action and the Centre implements those policies under the direction of the head of the Centre, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights,

Taking into account the fact that the responsibilities of the High Commissioner include, inter alia, engaging in a dialogue with all Governments in the implementation of his mandate with a view to the promotion and protection of all human rights, and rationalizing, adapting, strengthening and streamlining the United Nations machinery in the field of human rights with a view to improving its efficiency and effectiveness,

Acknowledging that, while further improvement in the functioning and efficiency of the Centre, together with a strong emphasis on good management practices, is needed in order to enable the Centre to cope with its constantly increasing workload, good management practices need to be complemented by additional resources commensurate with additional mandates,

Taking note of the information provided by the High Commissioner with regard to the ongoing process aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Centre, and bearing in mind, in this context, the request

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2/ Ibid., para. 13.

3/ Ibid., para. 1.

of the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1995/93 of 10 March 1995 4/ to the Secretary-General to convene, at least twice a year at Geneva, meetings with all interested States to provide information on the activities conducted by the Centre and its process of restructuring,

Recognizing that this process should contribute to the strengthening of the functional framework for integrated and consolidated activities of the Secretariat in the field of human rights,

Recalling that in its report to the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council, 5/ the Commission on Human Rights reaffirmed that the paramount consideration in the employment of staff at every level was the need for the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, and that it was convinced that that was compatible with the principle of equitable geographical distribution, and bearing in mind Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat 6/ and the note by the Secretary-General on the geographical composition and functions of the staff of the Centre, 7/ as well as the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 8/

1. Supports and encourages the efforts of the Secretary-General to enhance the role and further improve the functioning of the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat, under the overall supervision of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;

2. Reiterates the need to ensure that all the necessary human, financial, material and personnel resources are provided without delay to the High Commissioner and the Centre to enable them to carry out efficiently, effectively and expeditiously the mandates assigned to them;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to make available additional human and financial resources, within the overall regular budget of the United Nations, to enhance the capability of the High Commissioner and of the Centre to fulfil effectively their respective mandates and their ability to carry out mandated operational activities and to coordinate efficiently with other relevant departments of the Secretariat, as well as other organs, bodies and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, including on logistical and

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4/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 3 and corrigenda (E/1995/23 and Corr.1 and 2), chap. II, sect. A.

5/ E/CN.4/1988/85 and Corr.1.

6/ A/50/678.

7/ A/50/682.

8/ A/50/36.

4. Supports fully the High Commissioner in his efforts to strengthen the human rights activities of the United Nations, inter alia, through measures aimed at restructuring the Centre to improve its efficiency and effectiveness;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to submit an interim report to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-second session and a final report to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the strengthening of the human rights programme and on the measures taken to implement the present resolution.

99th plenary meeting
22 December 1995